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## THE NATIONAL AMALGAMATED ASSOCIATION OF IRON, STEEL, AND TIN WORKERS, 1892-1901.\*

IN the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* for July, 1893, there appeared an article giving the history of what was then known as the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers, the history being brought down to the year 1892. The purpose of the present article is to record the history of that association since that year. There was a change in the title of the association in May, 1897, when the tin workers were recognized as an important part of the association. So it is now the National Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers. The association is affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.

It is well at the present time to recapitulate briefly the history of the association from its organization. The Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers, as its name indicated, was the result of the combination of several trade bodies. The original societies which were consolidated in 1876, under the name of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers of the United States, were known previous to that date as the United Sons of Vulcan, consisting of boilers and puddlers; the Associated Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Rollers, and Roughers of the United States, consisting of men employed at the furnaces and rolls; and the Iron and Steel Roll Hands Union, composed of catchers, hookers, helpers, and others engaged about the trains of works. These orders were separate and distinct prior to the amalgamation which took place August 4, 1876. The oldest of these three bodies, the

\* I take pleasure in acknowledging my indebtedness to Mr. T. J. Shaffer, president of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers, for data relating to the history of the association since 1892.

United Sons of Vulcan, originated in Pittsburg, where a local union was formed April 17, 1858, known as the Iron City Forge. The second order, so far as age is concerned, which was merged in the new association was the Associated Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Rollers, and Roughers, an order instituted in August, 1872, with headquarters at Springfield, Illinois. The third organization, and the junior one, in the Amalgamated Association, was the Iron and Steel Roll Hands Union, organized June 2, 1873, with its general office at Columbus, Ohio.

The first convention of the consolidated associations was held at Pittsburg, August 4, 1876, when an elaborate constitution was adopted. This constitution has been amended from time to time, and now consists of thirty-eight articles, the principal features of which, as well as the declaration of principles, were given in the history of the association in the *Journal* for July, 1893.

Up to 1892, the year of the great Homestead conflict, the association had been remarkably free from disastrous strikes. It had had various difficulties; but, as it had been one of the chief exponents of the use of the sliding scale of wages, it avoided more than any other contemporaneous organization many petty strikes and difficulties. Before giving an account of the Homestead affair, the historical information will be detailed, leaving the experience of the association in conducting the various strikes in which it has participated since and including 1892 till the last.

The association, as at present organized, is composed of all men working in and around rolling mills, tin mills, steel works, chain works, nail, tack, spike, bolt, and nut factories, pipe mills, and all works run in connection with the same, except laborers. The latter are admitted at the discretion of the subordinate lodge, to which application must be made for membership. Thus skilled labor has a right to membership, but laborers unskilled can come in only at the discretion of the skilled members. Any person

employed at any job controlled by the association is eligible to membership, whether he be a stockholder or director.

The object of the association is the elevation of the position of its members, the maintenance of their best interests, and to obtain by conciliation, or by other means, just, legal, and fair remuneration to its members for their labor; and, further, to afford mutual protection to members against broken contracts, obnoxious rules, unlawful discharge, or any system of injustice or oppression.

The general office of the association is located by the constitution in the city of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania; and the president and secretary-treasurer of the national body must reside where the general office is located. The association at its annual conventions elects the president, secretary-treasurer, assistant secretary, the managing editor of the *Amalgamated Journal*, a vice-president for each district or division of a district, and three trustees. All these officers hold until their successors are elected.

The national conventions of the Amalgamated Association — and this general term will be used instead of reciting the full title of the association — have been held at the following-named times and places: Pittsburg, 1876; Columbus, 1877; Wheeling, 1878; Youngstown, 1879; Pittsburg, 1880; Cleveland, 1881; Chicago, 1882; Philadelphia, 1883; Pittsburg, 1884; Wheeling, 1885. All these conventions were held in August. Those from 1886 to 1893 were held annually in June and at Pittsburg. After that the places of holding the conventions have varied; but the time of meeting has been in May,—in Cleveland, 1894 and 1895; Detroit, 1896 and 1897; Cincinnati, 1898; Detroit, 1899; Indianapolis, 1900; Milwaukee, 1901.

The number of delegates in attendance at each convention, the number of active lodges each year, the total membership of the order at the time of each annual con-

vention, and the average membership per lodge since the organization of the order are given in the following table :

REPORTED TO CONVENTION HELD AT	Year.	Delegates in attend- ance.	Number of active lodges.	Total mem- bership.	Average membership per lodge.
Columbus . . . . .	1877	77	111	3,755	34
Wheeling . . . . .	1878	91	110	4,044	37
Youngstown . . . . .	1879	104	104	5,500	52
Pittsburg . . . . .	1880	192	155	9,550	62
Cleveland . . . . .	1881	173	166	10,359	62
Chicago . . . . .	1882	213	197	16,003	81
Philadelphia . . . . .	1883	153	183	11,800	64
Pittsburg . . . . .	1884	149	160	9,242	58
Wheeling . . . . .	1885	88	107	5,702	53
Pittsburg . . . . .	1886	121	106	7,219	68
Pittsburg . . . . .	1887	172	154	11,426	74
Pittsburg . . . . .	1888	194	172	14,946	87
Pittsburg . . . . .	1889	194	189	16,117	85
Pittsburg . . . . .	1890	253	234	20,781	88
Pittsburg . . . . .	1891	294	290	24,068	83
Pittsburg . . . . .	1892	254	291	20,975	72
Pittsburg . . . . .	1893	152	234	13,613	58
Cleveland . . . . .	1894	96	150	10,000	66
Cleveland . . . . .	1895	85	125	10,000	80
Detroit . . . . .	1896	115	132	11,000	83
Detroit . . . . .	1897	123	145	10,500	72
Cincinnati . . . . .	1898	118	153	10,500	65
Detroit . . . . .	1899	140	145	11,050	76
Indianapolis . . . . .	1900	202	181	14,035	77
Milwaukee . . . . .	1901	200	160	13,892	87

The annual conventions are often continued through many days, sometimes lasting for two or three weeks; for at each convention the association adjusts scales for the ensuing year, and the multitude of details attending the adoption of a scale of wages adjusted to market prices of iron and steel involves a vast deal of labor and many conferences.

There have been but few changes in the constitution of the association since 1892. In 1893 the constitution was changed to provide for a referendum vote on scale questions after the regular conference committee had failed to reach a settlement with the employers; but this provision was abrogated in 1901, because it was found to be expen-

sive, injurious to the interests of the order, and unprofitable. The only constitutional change with reference to strikes was in 1899, being Section 23 of Article 17, the new law reading as follows: "Should one mill in a combine or trust have a difficulty, all mills in said combine or trust shall cease work until such grievance is settled." This new law played a very important part in the recent steel strike. It is very probable that this amendment will be rescinded or altered at an early convention, because it was found inefficient during the contest of the Amalgamated Association with the United States Steel Corporation. Some minor changes in the constitution have been made, but they are not vital. In 1899 the association withdrew its support from the *National Labor Tribune*, an independent trades journal, and issued its own paper, called the *Amalgamated Journal*. This venture has been a decided financial success.

During the past ten years the Amalgamated Association has not absorbed any new bodies; but it has released several,—the chain-makers in 1894; the men who work in tin-house or wash-house where plates are coated with tin, lead, or composite material (these men formed the American Tin Plate Workers' Protective Association in 1899 at Kansas City, Missouri); and the rod-mill workers, who formed an independent organization in 1896, but which is now defunct. The Amalgamated also released the tube workers in 1901, but has an arrangement with the American Federation of Labor providing that all men working in rolling mills, when organized by that body, shall be made part of the Amalgamated Association upon its request.

It is greatly to the credit of the Amalgamated Association that during its twenty-five years of existence it has had but five presidents,—Joseph Bishop, John Jarrett, William Weihe, and W. M. Garland,—accounts of whom were given in the previous article. Mr. Garland continued as

president until April 9, 1898, when the present president, Mr. T. J. Shaffer, was elected; and Mr. Shaffer has since held and continues to hold that office. He was born in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, April 23, 1857. He served as roller and manager in sheet, plate, and tin mills, and while serving in these capacities began his education, completing the same at the Western University at Pittsburg. After leaving the mills, he was for ten years a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, retiring on account of enfeebled health, and after retiring from the ministry was elected president of the Amalgamated Association, as already stated.

The secretaries since 1892 have been John Kilgallon, whose office in 1895 was expanded so as to cover the duties of the treasurer, the title being secretary and treasurer, Mr. Kilgallon serving till February 4, 1897, the date of his death; Stephen Madden, who was made secretary-treasurer after the death of Mr. Kilgallon; and John Williams, who succeeded Mr. Madden May 27, 1898, and who has served since that date. The association has learned the importance to its interests of continuing its experienced men in office.

The Amalgamated, as already stated, during the first fifteen years of its life was strong in its advocacy of the sliding scale; and its experience since 1892 has convinced its administrative force of the wisdom of adopting that scale. Their experience with it has been satisfactory on the whole, although each year resolutions are presented looking to its abolition. Those opposed to it, however, have never offered anything so effective to take its place or that appealed so much to the justice of the membership of the association. Consequently, the use of the scale continues to be indorsed by the majority of the members of the association; and it has, without exception, the approval of the employers with whom the association deals.

The association, on the whole, has also been in favor of some conciliatory method of dealing with troubles when they arise, being ready, as a rule, to submit its grievances to arbitration, as will be seen when relating its experience in its great strikes. President Shaffer, in his annual reports, has proposed wage settlements by conciliation and mediation; and his recommendations were indorsed by the last convention, and will become operative in May, 1902, when the conferences meet to arrange the scales of wages. In 1900 the executive council on two occasions agreed to arbitrate; but the work of conference committees, or those engaged in making collective bargains, rendered it unnecessary.

The financial condition of the order has varied with its varied experience. The following table gives the total receipts, total expenditures, and strike disbursements from 1892 to 1901, inclusive :—

YEAR.	Total receipts.	Total expenditures.	Strike disbursements.
1892 . . . . .	\$153,434.49	\$193,222.33	\$115,504.00
1893 . . . . .	211,347.13	178,741.71	53,433.15
1894 . . . . .	25,341.92	42,404.71	20,497.00
1895 . . . . .	18,996.94	21,048.40	4,798 00
1896 . . . . .	22,290.55	12,525.76	200.00
1897 . . . . .	21,170.69	15,962.96	2,118.00
1898 . . . . .	24,199.93	25,830.65	11,151.00
1899 . . . . .	30,237.93	22,202.62	
1900 . . . . .	49,439.53	27,364.40	
1901 . . . . .	119,659.07	44,760.33	3,139.74 *

The financial years of the association begin April 1 and end March 31. Therefore the last year's account in the preceding statement is up to March 31, 1901. The association allows \$6 per week for victimized members. There is no other allowance on account of such members.

In 1891 the association had a membership of about

\* There has been distributed \$125,000 on account of the late steel strike since its inception up to October 26.



24,000. It has never since reached this number. The smallest membership was in 1894 and 1895, when it dropped to 10,000. There has been since then, on the whole, some increase; but it is noticeable that after the Homestead affair in 1892 the membership fell off very rapidly. The figures show a very great falling off in membership and in financial resources from 1892 to 1898, after which there was a steady increase in membership and consequently in receipts. The decline is attributable to the Homestead strike. The membership now is about 14,000.

The tenure of membership has been unchanged, and there has been evidence of better understanding and more harmonious business relations between the employer and the workmen until during the last few months. This better understanding has been the result of increased study and knowledge of trade relations, the conditions of production, and the mutuality of interest. Probably any retarding influence which the recent contest may have had upon these relations will be temporary; and, when the parties to it thoroughly understand each other, in all probability the good relations existing prior to the difficulty will be more than reinstated.

The strike attitude of the association has not been changed during the past ten years, the laws of the association stating that no sub-lodge shall be permitted to enter upon a strike unless authorized by the executive committee of the district or division having particular jurisdiction; and, when so authorized, the general office must be notified in writing, when the secretary of the national lodge prepares a printed statement of all the facts in the case, and forwards the same, under the seal of the national lodge, to all sub-lodges, warning all loyal members of the order not to accept work in the mills, shops, or factories involved.

From 1876, when the Amalgamated Association was organized, to November, 1892, there had been paid to men

engaged in strikes and lockouts and those victimized about \$600,000. Since then the amount so paid out, including disbursements on account of recent steel strike, aggregates \$220,336.89, or a total since the organization of the association of \$820,336.89. The association has taken great pride in fulfilling its constitutional obligations by paying its members their benefits when they become due.

The experience of the Amalgamated Association in labor contests, notwithstanding its constant advocacy of conciliatory methods in adopting sliding scales for the adjustment of wages, has been not only varied, but at times bitter; and in the great Homestead contest, which partook of the elements of a lockout and a strike, the experience was somewhat disastrous, dramatic, and even tragic.\* Many of the contests in which the association has been engaged have been trivial, and, even when serious, have not been accompanied by violence or any complications beyond those attending the efforts to secure the adoption of wage scales. In many cases where the scale has been the subject of short discussion between the committees of the association and the employers there have been compromises or the concession by one side or the other to counter-demands.

The recital of all the facts relating to the association's labor wars, excluding the Homestead affair and the late steel strike, would have no particular value in a history of

\* There are a good many accounts, official and otherwise, of what is known as the Homestead strike. The leading accounts are to be found in the reports of the committee of the United States Senate ordered to investigate and report the facts in relation to the employment for private purposes of armed bodies of men, etc., in connection with differences between workmen and employers (Senate Report No. 1280, 52d Congress, Second Session); the report of the House Committee on the Judiciary ordered to investigate the employment of Pinkerton detectives (H. R. Report No. 2447, 52d Congress, Second Session); Appleton's *Annual Encyclopædia* for 1892; Annual Report of the Bureau of Industrial Statistics of Pennsylvania for 1892; "The Homestead Strike," by Edward W. Bemis (*Journal of Political Economy*, Chicago University, June, 1894); *Industrial Evolution of the United States*, chap. xxv., by the author. The statement herewith presented has been drawn largely from accounts in manuscript in the possession of the writer.

the association, and would be simply the repetition of many petty details; but the magnitude of the two great labor wars in which the association has participated demands, for historical purposes, quite full general treatment. The minor contests are well illustrated by a strike which occurred among the tin workers in 1894, the cause of the strike being a protest against a 30 per cent. reduction. The affair was compromised by accepting a 15 per cent. reduction, but the result to the order was the loss of five union-scale mills. All the contests other than the two great ones during the past ten years have been, as a rule, petty strikes on the part of some of the subordinate lodges of workmen connected with the Amalgamated Association.

The Homestead difficulty, which was the first great contest in which the Amalgamated took part as an association, was complicated in many directions. For many years sliding scales had been based upon the price of bar iron, as bar iron was the most thoroughly staple article in the iron market; but for a few years prior to 1892, when the Homestead difficulty arose, the price of steel billets had constituted the basis for the adjustment of the scale. Of course, there had been many changes in various respects in the adjustment of the scales prior to July 1, 1892. These adjustments had been rendered necessary on account of improvements that had been introduced in the production of steel, but in making these changes the employers and employees had with more or less difficulty reached agreements that were fairly satisfactory to both parties. This was essentially the case with the Carnegie Steel Company in relation to their employees at Homestead. Early in 1892, however, the management of the company proposed a reduction in rates. It also proposed a reduction in the minimum price of steel billets. There was also a proposition that the number of men in some of the crews be reduced; and in addition to these propositions there was a

demand on the part of the management that the date of terminating the scale, which had been in June or July, should be projected to December, and, further, that in some of the departments the number of hours be increased from eight to twelve. Other regulations and rules of employment that the association had secured from the management were to be abolished. The management intended that these propositions should take effect in the open hearth, armor plate, and 119-inch plate mills; but the other departments were to continue at the old rates until the mills had been renovated and put on a more modern basis, when it was the proposition of the management to seek a rearrangement in the schedules of rates.

Putting these propositions into categorical form, and summarizing them as to the most important elements of the contract which was proposed to the men, it is found that there were three leading points,— first, a reduction in the minimum of the scale for billets from \$25 to \$22; second, a change in the expiration of the date of the scales from June 30 to December 31; third, a reduction of tonnage rates at those furnaces and mills in which important improvements had been made and new machinery introduced, whereby the output had been greatly increased, as also a reduction in the earnings of some of the workmen.

The reason given by the company for reducing the minimum on which the scale was to be based was that the market price of steel had gone down below \$25 per ton, it being considered by the company that it would be unfair if the workmen should have the benefit of a rise in the market price above \$25, and should share none of the losses when the price fell below that figure. As a matter of fact, it was contended by the company that there ought not to be any minimum in the adjustment of the scale, especially as there was no maximum figure on which such a scale was based. The workmen, on the other hand, were certain in the reasonableness of their conviction that there

should be a minimum; for, as they claimed, they had no voice in fixing the selling price of the products of their labor, hence the necessity of the minimum to protect them against any cutting of price or discrimination in favor of buyers.

The reason given for the proposition to change the time at which contracts should cease was that the steel business was usually duller at the end of the calendar year than at the time then fixed for the closing of such contracts,—that is, June 30,—and, that being the case, it was contended that it was much easier to adjust new scales for the future. A further reason advanced on the part of the company for making this change in time was that sales were often made for an entire year: hence labor contracts could be more safely made if they began and ended at times corresponding with contracts made with their customers. This contention was combated by the workmen on the ground that they would not be in a condition in midwinter to resist attempts which might be made on the part of the company to lower the scale of wages, and consequently, in case of a strike, there would be great difficulty in maintaining their position,—at least more difficulty than would be experienced in July. They claimed that the change contemplated would put them to a disadvantage in conducting negotiations with the company.

After receiving the proposition outlined above, which the Carnegie Company made through its chairman, Mr. Frick, the association submitted a counter-proposition to the effect that the contracts should end the last of June, as formerly, and that, if any change was to be demanded, three months' notice must be given them, and that, if this was not done, the contract which was to run for three years should continue for another year; that is, from June 30, 1895, until June 30, 1896. The company promptly rejected this counter-proposition, but finally submitted a proposition making the minimum \$23 per ton

for steel billets as the basis instead of \$22, as originally proposed. The association met this proposition by an offer to reduce the minimum from \$25 to \$24, but positively refused to arrange a minimum on any lower figures. The desire of the company to arrange for a renewal of the scale, or contract, is well shown by a letter written by Mr. Frick, the manager of the Carnegie Company, on the 30th of May, 1892, and addressed to the superintendent of the Homestead Steel Works. This letter is as follows :—

*Dear Sir,*—Referring to my visit to the works this morning, I now hand you herewith Homestead Steel Works wages scales for the open hearth plants and No. 32 and 119-inch mills, which you will please present immediately to the joint committee, with the request that its decision be given thereon not later than June 24, 1892.

These scales have had most careful consideration with a desire to act toward our employees in the most liberal manner. A number of rates have been advanced upon your recommendation, and the wages which will be earned thereunder are considerably in advance of those received by the employees of any of our competitors in the same lines. You can say to the committee that these scales are in all respects the most liberal that can be offered. We do not care whether a man belongs to a union or not, nor do we wish to interfere. He may belong to as many unions or organizations as he chooses, but we think our employees at Homestead Steel Works would fare much better working under the system in vogue at Edgar Thompson and Duquesne.

Yours truly,

H. C. FRICK, *Chairman.*

June 22, Mr. Frick wrote Mr. Weihe, then president of the Amalgamated Association, as follows :—

*Dear Sir,*—Our superintendent at Homestead, Mr. Potter, advises that a committee from your association waited on him last night and asked for a conference to-morrow at ten o'clock, and that, if satisfactory to us, to advise you to-day. We beg to say that we will be glad to meet you and a committee with full power to act for those of our Homestead employees who are members of your association to-morrow at this office at ten o'clock.

Yours very truly,

H. C. FRICK, *Chairman.*

Here was the basis for difficulty. The ultimatum of the company presented May 30, as stated in the foregoing letter of that date, was considered, of course, by the executive officials of the association and the members thereof; and it was decided to ask for another conference, which was held on the 23d of June. At this conference the representatives of the workmen offered to reduce the minimum of the scale from \$25 to \$24, while the company held that it would not go higher than \$23, and insisted that all other stipulations remain as submitted in the letter of May 30. This position was not satisfactory to the workmen, and the conference adjourned, after which the mill continued to work until the morning of June 30, when the company closed down the works.

Thus was laid the basis for the conflict at Homestead in 1892. That year had opened with two of the Carnegie plants run by non-union men. These were the Edgar Thompson at Braddock, where the Knights of Labor had been defeated in 1888, and the Duquesne Steel Works, which were bought in 1890. The contracts at the Carnegie plants at Homestead and at some others employing members of the Amalgamated Association were to expire in June and July, 1892. The relations of employers and men at Homestead were apparently on a friendly basis. The men had about \$140,000 on deposit with the company, and this sum was drawing interest at 6 per cent. The company had loaned sixty-nine workers nearly \$43,000, or an average of \$620 each, with which to purchase homes. There never had been any foreclosures. It seems somewhat strange, therefore, that after all the experience of the Amalgamated Association with the employers there should come a time when they should find themselves not only antagonizing each other in conference and in the bitter disputes of counter-propositions, but actually in battle array.

It is necessary, therefore, to understand something of

the reasons which brought on the fierce conflict that made the Homestead affair of 1892 memorable in labor wars. Mr. William T. Roberts, a member of the employees' committee, testified before the Senate committee investigating the Homestead contest that his associates were willing to make any reductions where it could be shown that reductions were necessary ; and he told some of the employers that his committee wished to settle the difficulty without trouble, and did not want a strike. After the first propositions were made by the company and rejected by the men, and the latter had submitted their counter-proposition, little was heard about the renewal of contracts until the very last of May ; but during April and May the company enclosed the grounds with a high fence, with barbed wire protection on the top, the fence being pierced with holes. The sewers leading from the grounds were provided with gratings, search-lights were erected, and other preparations were made, apparently with the purpose of defending the works against some anticipated attack. Such actions, under ordinary conditions, cannot be accounted for, but it is reasonable to suppose that there was something in the experience of the past which led the company to take such unprecedented precautions ; and these reasons were given by Mr. Frick in his testimony before the committee of the United States House of Representatives which investigated the employment of Pinkerton detectives at Homestead.

There had been trouble in 1889 in the adjustment of the scale which went into effect that year and which was to expire June 30, 1892. Mr. Frick says that the company felt the necessity in 1889 of a change at the works, and he insists that at that time the workmen began tactics similar to those employed early in 1892. During the troubles in 1889 the sheriff assured the company that there would be no difficulty, that he would give it ample protection, and see that men who were willing to work



were not interfered with. The sheriff took a posse of over one hundred men to the works; but they were not permitted to land on the property of the company,—in fact, they were driven off with threats of bodily harm, and the prospect was that there would be great destruction of life and property. This action frightened the Carnegie Company.

This fright three years before led to the apprehension, as claimed by the Carnegie Company, of serious difficulty in 1892; and it felt justified in preparing, as related, for any conflict which might occur, to guard against which, not having much confidence in the sheriff's forces, it employed three hundred Pinkerton guards to come to Pittsburg and aid in the protection of the property at Homestead, and of men who were willing to take the places of the locked-out workmen.

At this time the men made a most serious mistake by chasing out of town, or into places where they could not be found, all persons who were ready to take the places of association members; for by this time (July 1), while the lockout had been declared, the affair took on some of the features of a strike, as large numbers at Homestead other than those locked out, even unskilled and unorganized men, struck out of sympathy with their locked-out brothers. The fear existed that, were wages reduced and the Amalgamated Association broken up, the wages of non-union men would be reduced in time.

The president of the Amalgamated Association for the nine years ending near the close of 1892 made the following statement in his testimony before the Senate committee:—

I believe if the company would have conceded to a conference again, and kept up negotiations until the 1st of July, there might have been a possibility of arriving at some settlement that would have been satisfactory to both parties. My experience has been in the past nine or ten years that very often, when a conference took

place, in the beginning it looked as if no agreement could be reached, but, when the day came upon which the scale expired, agreements were reached, and the work went on through conciliation. I believe, if the conference had been continued between the 23d of June and the 1st of July, finally some settlement would have been reached that would have been satisfactory to both parties.

Before the arrival of the Pinkerton guards the men, and, as they claimed, with the motive of loyalty to the company, undertook to guard the company's property. Notwithstanding their motive, this action exasperated the management, which could not look behind the action itself. The fact that the workmen protected the property from damage by the strikers, even to the extent of repairing leaky gas-cocks and mains, did not convince the company that the workmen had any right to prevent the foremen from entering, although officers of the company were allowed to enter the works. The guards of the workmen, by resorting to persuasion and threats, according to the testimony of the superintendent, only added to the existing antagonism. Granting that the motives of the men in guarding the property were to prevent its destruction, it must be conceded, by them even, that a very grave mistake was committed. They were exasperated by the erection of defences and the news of the employment of a large body of Pinkerton guards. Their counter-action was to take possession of the grounds within the defences, that they might prevent the entrance of the guards; and as an act of humane warfare they thought they were justified in preventing the company from having the care of its own property.

Another exasperating feature is found in the conditions of the men at Homestead. Many of them had made little homes for themselves, and some of them had been partly paid for. They were allowed the privilege of belonging to their own association or to any association to which they saw fit to attach themselves. They were naturally

loyal to their organization, and felt that through its influence they had been enabled to accumulate sufficient money to build their houses. So, when they found themselves confronted with what they considered a foreign force, and with imported laborers to take their places in the works, they felt that their own homes were in danger; and they very naturally made preparations to defend them. The company, not taking these things into consideration in sufficient degree and feeling that unlawful possession had been taken of its works, was not in any more conciliatory spirit than the men themselves.

These conditions and the influences growing out of the conditions could have but one result,—a physical conflict; and this conflict began on the evening of July 5, when the Pinkerton men reached the scene. It is not necessary at the present time to repeat in detail the oft-told story of the battle at Homestead. It has been thought wise to recite with some fullness the events which led to the conflict, because there have been so many conflicting accounts of conditions, motives, and circumstances that a history of the Amalgamated Association ought to give them. The story of the battle, for the sake of historical integrity, however, may be briefly told.

The controversy was the severest in the history of the United States. Probably the most extensive and far-reaching strike which can properly be classed among the historical labor controversies of the nineteenth century was the Chicago strike of June and July, 1894; but the most thrilling and dramatic incident or event in the labor movements in this country must be considered the Homestead affair of July 5 and 6, 1892. July 4 the officers of the Carnegie Steel Company asked the sheriff of the county to appoint deputies to protect the works while it carried out its intention of making repairs. The employees, on their part, undertook to defend the works against what they called encroachments or demands to enter. When

the sheriff's men approached, the workmen, who were assembled in force, notified them to leave the place. They further offered to act as deputies,—an offer which was promptly declined. Fighting commenced on the evening of the 5th of July, the immediate cause of the clash being the approach of the Pinkerton detectives, who were gathered in two steel-lined barges on the river some miles below the works. When the Pinkertons arrived, the workmen broke through the mill fence, intrenched themselves behind steel billets, and made all preparations to resist the approach of the barges. They resisted all attempts to land, this resistance resulting in a fierce battle, brought on by a heavy volley of shots from the strikers, although it has been a question as to whether the first shots were fired by the Pinkertons or by the men. The Pinkertons were armed with Winchesters, but they were forced to ascend an embankment in single file, and so were compelled to return to the boats, suffering severely from the opposing fire. Many efforts were made to land; but the position of the men the detectives were attacking was an exceedingly strong one, they having intrenched themselves behind breastworks protected by steel rails and billets, and from this safe place of refuge the detectives were subjected to a most galling fire.

The battle was renewed the following morning (July 6), when a brass ten-pound cannon had been secured by the strikers and so planted as to command the barges moored at the banks of the river. Another force of a thousand men had taken up a position on the opposite side of the river, where they protected themselves and the cannon which they had obtained by a breastwork of railroad ties. Just before nine o'clock the bombardment commenced, the cannon being trained on the boats; and the fire was kept up for several hours. As the boats were protected by heavy steel plates inside, efforts were made to fire them by the means

of hose and oil spread on the decks and sides of the barges, and with barrels of oil emptied into the river above the mooring-place, the purpose being to ignite it and then allow it to float against the boats; but this proved only partly successful. Under these combined movements, however, the Pinkertons were obliged to throw out a flag of truce. Seven of their men had been killed and twenty or thirty wounded in the battles. The officers of the Amalgamated Association interfered, and a surrender of the detectives was arranged. It was proposed that they should be safely guarded under condition that they left their arms and ammunition. These terms were accepted. The governor of the State was called on for troops, as the sheriff confessed that he could not keep order; and on the 12th of July a division of the National Guard of Pennsylvania, under arms and with ammunition, was ordered to support the sheriff of Allegheny County at Homestead. During the interval before the troops arrived, however, there was much looting, clubbing, and stoning; and the detectives, even after their surrender, while passing through the streets were treated with great cruelty and abuse. Eleven workmen and spectators were killed in the various fights. For dramatic incident there is nothing in all the romantic labor literature from Disraeli's *Sybil* to Zola's *Labor* to equal this battle at Homestead in 1892.

On the arrival of the soldiers the Carnegie Company took possession of its works and began to make preparation to resume operations with non-union men; but it was difficult to secure skilled workmen, and several months elapsed before the company was able to obtain all the men desired. While the men were greatly dissatisfied at the conduct of the company, further resistance to its plans was futile. New employees were fed and housed within the enclosure for several weeks until there was a sufficient number to warrant them in feeling some security in going outside under the protection of sheriff's deputies. These

new employees were to all intents and purposes voluntary prisoners.

There was not much opportunity for negotiation ; and feeling was intensified when, July 23, the anarchist Alexander Berkman made an attempt upon Mr. Frick's life. It has never been shown, or claimed even, that this attempt was made with the knowledge or even connivance of the striking workmen ; but it very naturally intensified the feeling of antagonism. Public-spirited gentlemen were at that time undertaking to secure some reconciliation ; but the attempted assassination of Mr. Frick completely barred the way to conciliatory efforts, although the officers of the Amalgamated Association declared that there was no disposition on the part of the employees to stand upon the question of scale, or wages, or hours, or anything else,—that all that was wanted was a reopening of the conference doors.

It was July 27 when the works at Homestead reopened under military protection. All the troops save one regiment had been withdrawn by September 19. The striking mechanics and laborers returned to work November 17 and 18, and the Amalgamated Association on the 20th of November declared the strike at an end. Most, but not all, of the older men were taken back. Many new men had been employed ; and until the new scale was arranged, in July of the following year, wages and conditions of employment were such as the company saw fit to grant.

The action of July 6 resulted in 163 indictments for conspiracy, riot, treason, and murder. A few were tried, but there were no convictions. Members of the association brought charges against the Carnegie officials and the Pinkertons, but neither were ever prosecuted.

Early in 1893 two men were convicted and imprisoned on the charge of causing the death of some of the non-union men by poisoning their food, but it has never been maintained by any one that the members of the Amalga-

mated or the advisory committee either connived at or indorsed the crime.

The cost of the strike can be fairly well stated in figures. Mr. Frick testified before the Congressional committee that the strike cost the men in wages during its 143 days of duration about \$1,000,000. The official records of the United States Department of Labor show that the men lost in wages \$820,000, and paid out in assistance \$120,000, being \$940,000 in all, and that the company's loss was \$750,000. There were 1,600 new employees brought into the works as the result of the lockout. The loss of the men engaged in the sympathetic strikes accompanying the lockout was, in wages, \$945,000, and in assistance paid out \$50,000, or a total of \$995,000, while the employers, on account of the sympathetic strikes, met a loss of about \$200,000. There were 1,250 new employees brought into the works that engaged in sympathetic strike. The State treasurer of Pennsylvania has stated that the cost to the State in maintaining order at Homestead was \$440,246. The aggregate cost in losses of the Homestead lockout-strike, so far as can be ascertained, was therefore \$3,325,246.

The Amalgamated Association was greatly reduced in strength by the loss of members in consequence of the defeat at Homestead; but that defeat does not seem to have seriously influenced the wage scales in mills not competing with the Homestead works, for a scale was most amicably arranged in July, 1893, between twenty-three companies in the Iron and Steel Sheet Manufacturers' Association and the trades-unions comprising the workmen employed by those companies. And how different were the sentiments accompanying the Amalgamated Association's adjustment of a scale at Homestead in 1893 from those which existed the previous year! The following is the statement of the secretary of the association at the close of the conference at that time:—

The scale on sheet and tin mills was signed this morning at one o'clock. The scale as arranged is practically the same as that in force last year. A few adjustments have been made that are equally advantageous to both parties. The sessions of this conference have been very pleasant. The disposition on the part of both was clearly that of acting justly. All felt that mutual interests were at stake, and the business-like manner in which the conference was conducted is highly creditable to all concerned. When the scale had been signed, President Garland spoke appropriately of the friendly feelings existing, and was followed by Mr. McMurtry, who complimented the Amalgamated Association committee for the very acceptable manner in which they had conducted their negotiations. A very satisfactory tariff resolution was readily agreed to.

The association went into the Homestead conflict, which was a mixed strike and lockout, with its affairs thoroughly systematized. It also had the prestige of a successful order, and was in possession of a satisfactory bank account. The contest was waged really more largely for the purpose of securing recognition than for any other reason. The question of wages and prices existed, but that question was subordinated; and the determination, on the one hand, to break the influence of the Amalgamated Association, and on the other to crystallize and preserve it, formed the real question at issue. The impairment of the association left it in a weakened condition, and it has never since regained the full strength that it had at the beginning of 1892.

The second great contest in which the Amalgamated Association participated was the steel strike of the year 1901, which was begun on the first day of July by the sheet steel workers alone, the American Sheet Steel Company having failed to sign the scale. On the 29th of June a general strike of the sheet steel workers was ordered, and it lasted until September 15, when work was resumed in accordance with the settlement made September 13.\*

\* In the preparation of this account I have depended largely upon information from original sources, although I have had the benefit of some excellent academic discussions, notably the following: "The Strike of the Steel



The story of the recent steel strike has not been fully told, but it can now be briefly recited. In the early part of 1900 the Amalgamated Association organized a non-union mill at Wood's Sheet Mill, McKeesport, Pennsylvania. In February, 1901, the American Sheet Steel officials, learning what had been done at Wood's Sheet Mill, discharged some of the men. This was regarded by the association as an action hostile to organized labor, and at the convention of the Amalgamated Association held in May last it was decided that the association would test the matter by insisting upon scales being signed for all the constituent companies of the United States Steel Corporation. This corporation was a new company, having \$1,404,000,000 capitalization. Its amended certificate was filed at Trenton, New Jersey, February 25, 1901, the constituent companies being the Federal Steel Company, National Steel Company, National Tube Company, American Steel and Wire Company of New Jersey, American Tin Plate Company, American Steel Hoop Company, American Sheet Steel Company, American Bridge Company, and Lake Superior Consolidated Iron Mines. The corporation also controls the Shelby Steel Company. Instead, then, of having for its opponent the American Sheet Steel Company, which had discharged some of the Amalgamated's men in February, the association found itself the antagonist of the great and powerful United States Steel Corporation.

The demand to have the scale signed for all the constituent companies of the great Steel Corporation was refused, the result being that the Amalgamated Association put into operation Section 23 of Article 17 of its constitution, which reads as follows: "Should one mill in a combine or trust have a difficulty, all mills in said combine or trust shall cease work until such grievance is settled." Roughly estimated, this action affected 100,000 persons.

Workers," by Dr. Talcott Williams, in the *Review of Reviews* for September, 1901, and articles in *Gunton's Magazine* for August, September, October, and November, 1901.

On the 29th of June the joint conference committee of the Amalgamated Association and the American Sheet Steel Company were unable to reach an agreement on the wage scale for the ensuing year, and adjourned finally after a session of less than twenty minutes. The demand for an advance in wages was conceded; and Mr. Persifor F. Smith, for the American Sheet Steel Company, offered to sign for 21 mills, accepted in the past as union mills, out of 28 mills controlled by the company. The Amalgamated refused to sign for any unless all were accepted as union; while Mr. Smith insisted upon his refusal to make signature for mills that had been non-union in the past, claiming in addition that two of these mills,—the Saltsburg and Old Meadow,—which had been union, had abandoned the Amalgamated Association, and later on this position was conceded.

Another issue was brought forward,—as to whether any change from the old individual way of making bargains to collective bargaining could be insisted upon, under threat of a strike, for mills in question as well as for all the mills under the control of the American Sheet Steel Company. The Amalgamated Association had a perfect right to require that a collective bargain should be made for such mills as it might designate, while the company insisted that its right to decide whether it would have individual instead of collective bargaining ought not to be questioned.

There were controversies relative to the mills controlled by the American Steel Hoop Company, which was ready, as it is understood, to agree to the sliding scale for mills that had been union, but refused to adopt such scales for mills that had been non-union in past years. The demand of the association was accompanied by a refusal to sign for any unless for all mills, with a strike in all as the alternative.

The issues were thus very clearly defined; and, no

agreement being reached, on the 29th of June the officers of the Amalgamated Association declared a strike for the sheet steel workers alone, which began on the first day of July. It was a contest for recognition of the right of the association to demand the unionizing of mills, a demand which was positively refused by the United States Steel Corporation. The questions of wages and of hours of labor, as stated, were not involved; and there were no grievances. It was clearly a conflict on the demand for recognition in the trade-union sense. It was the first great struggle that was conducted solely on this issue. The issue as to the recognition of organized labor has been contested many times, but usually in conjunction with some grievance or a demand as to wages or some other economic condition.

Unfortunately for the Amalgamated Association, it had not entirely recovered from the effects of the Homestead affair; and its managers did not recognize a position which most economists at the present time clearly understand,—the power of a labor organization successfully to stand a brief delay easier than capital, loaded down with contracts and responsibilities to buyers, conditions which lead to serious apprehension as the result of temporary interruption in production, but once the issue is joined, and business adjustments arranged in accordance with the anticipated delay, the employer can meet the stress resulting from an extended contest very much better than organized labor. Almost any great strike can be weakened, and ultimately broken, where there are time and money enough at the disposal of the corporation involved.

The Amalgamated Association was, therefore, stronger than the corporation prior to the ordering of the strike. Whatever demands it had put forward prior to the issues raised in June had been accepted, and there had been no objection to the organization of lodges in many of the non-union mills after they had become the property of

the United States Steel Corporation; but the attempt on the part of the Amalgamated Association to change the status of these mills was an attempt which met with a resistance so powerful that there was but one conclusion to be anticipated.

Both parties put forward claims they could not substantiate, each claiming more than it could control. The natural result of such a situation was a compromise, and this was proposed. The dispute involved 12 mills in all, in different constituent companies. The Steel Corporation offered to sign for 4 of them. The Amalgamated at the conference of July 11-13 demanded all or none, and on the 15th of July the general call for a strike was obeyed by departments other than those connected with the sheet steel workers and those of the Federal Steel Company.

Several conferences, the accounts of which are varied and interesting, were held between the officers of the corporation and the association, aided by friends of conciliatory methods, at intervals during the summer. The United States Steel Corporation did not refuse to confer with the officers of the Amalgamated Association, nor did it decline to submit or receive propositions in the interest of organized workers in the steel industry. About the middle of July a conference was held in New York, when the terms offered to the striking employees, involving the opening of all mills to non-union men as an offset to permitting the association to organize the men in the mills not then organized, were rejected, although it is currently reported that they were at first agreed to. That proposition, however, was not a very definite one. So far as the writer can ascertain, it was simply an agreement to submit the matters in controversy to the executive board of the Amalgamated Association. The result of a conference, which was held July 27, was put in writing by the president and secretary of the Amalgamated Association and Messrs. Morgan, Schwab, and Geary of the Steel

Corporation. Messrs. Shaffer and Williams agreed that immediately upon their return to Pittsburg they would call a meeting of the executive board of the Amalgamated Association to submit the agreement proposed by the Steel Corporation to said board, with the assurances given, and with such statements and reasons which might occur to them in favor of its approval. The executive board did not act favorably at this juncture, and the strike was continued.

The executive board of the Amalgamated went to New York August 3, and had a more extended interview with Mr. Morgan, Mr. Schwab, and others of the United States Steel Corporation. The terms of settlement discussed at this conference were: first, the strikers to withdraw their demand that employees in non-union mills be compelled to join the union; second, the steel companies to agree not to discharge any workers because of membership in the union or because of efforts to organize unions in the non-union mills; third, the wage scale agreed upon with the association to be the minimum scale in all mills, but the corporation to have the right of making special wage contracts at non-union mills, and the union scale not to be signed for those mills; fourth, all mills of all the companies to be open to any steel workers, whether members of the union or not.\* The officers of the Amalgamated would not accept the latter clause, and so the conference came to naught.

August 6 the president of the Amalgamated Association issued a call upon all Amalgamated and other union men, in name and in heart, to join in its movement to fight for labor's rights.

During the conference on the 27th of July it is understood that Mr. Morgan asserted that he was not hostile to organized labor; that he looked upon it with favor, to the extent that he preferred the well-organized and admin-

\* See *Gunton's Magazine*, September, 1901, p. 195.

istered trade union as the medium through which contracts for wages and other conditions of employment could be made rather than the chaotic and unreliable results following arrangements with individual workmen. He insisted that the Amalgamated Association ought not to attempt to drive him further than it was possible for him to go, assuring the officers that in the course of time, perhaps two years, his company would be ready to sign for all its constituent plants.\*

On the contrary, it is claimed by the officers of the Amalgamated Association that they were willing to submit matters to the adjustment of others or to make some concessions that might lead to a settlement, as appears in the following letter of August 8 to John Stevenson, Esq., signed by Mr. Shaffer, the president of the association, Mr. Williams, its secretary, and Mr. Davis and Mr. Tighe, all constituting the advisory board:—

The undersigned, the Advisory Board of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers of the United States, desire to express our appreciation of your disinterested efforts to end the unpleasant controversy existing between the United States Steel Company and our association.

In regard to the suggestion that our association agree to arbitrate the matters involved in the controversy with that company, we beg leave to say that, with a full realization of the great interests committed to our care and the general welfare of all, as well as our desire for industrial peace, we have agreed to accept your suggestion, and submit the following as a basis therefor:—

The United States Steel Company and the Amalgamated Association agree to arbitrate all matters in dispute.

The Board of Arbitration shall consist of three persons,—one selected by the company and the association respectively, and the third to be selected by the two persons named.

Upon the agreement of the United States Steel Company to the above, the company and the association shall, within three hours after being notified by you, name the respective representatives to constitute the members of the Board of Arbitration.

\*Mr. Samuel Gompers, in the *American Federationist* for October, 1901, p. 428, says that Mr. Schwab informed him that the above statement was made by Mr. Morgan to Mr. Shaffer at the conference of July 27.

The Board of Arbitration shall meet within twenty-four (24) hours, at such place as shall be designated by you.

Both the United States Steel Company and the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers agree to faithfully abide by the decision of the arbitrators.

We would respectfully suggest that the arbitrators meet in Philadelphia or Washington, D.C.

The foregoing letter was the result of a conference in Pittsburg between the officers of the Amalgamated Association, the president of the American Federation of Labor, and others. The letter to Mr. Stevenson, however, came to naught. Further attempts were made early in September, and finally, on the 4th, Messrs. John Mitchell, Samuel Gompers, Frank P. Sargent, J. W. Jenks, Henry White, and Ralph M. Easley, who had been interesting themselves to secure terms of settlement between the contending forces, met the representatives of the United States Steel Corporation in New York; and this committee secured from the Steel Corporation, in brief, the following terms:—

No discrimination against the re-employment of any one by the company by reason of his connection with the strike, and no question asked as to the membership of any man in the union.

The signing of the agreement for all mills which were union last year, except Old Meadow, Saltsburg, Hyde Park, Crescent, Irondale, Chester, Cambridge, Star, and Monessen. The Canal, Dover, and Demmler Mills were to be signed for as union mills.

These terms were objected by the officers of the association.

After more discussion and a recognition of the fact that the strikers were losing ground, an agreement was made with Mr. Shaffer September 13, the substance of which is as follows:—

Non-union mills shall be represented as such. No attempt made to organize, no charters granted; old charters retained by men, if they desire.

The company reserves the right to discharge any employee who

shall by interference, abuse, or constraint prevent another from peaceably following his vocation, without reference to connection with labor organizations.

Canal, Dover, Demmler, Old Meadow, Saltsburg, Hyde Park, Crescent, Irondale, Chester, Cambridge, Star, and Monessen not included as union mills.

In accordance with these terms the strike was declared off, and work was resumed September 15. It was a disastrous experience. In many respects one of the most remarkable strikes of modern times, it was nevertheless conducted without any of the dramatic and tragic circumstances which attended the Homestead affair in 1892. At the beginning of the strike of 1901 the Amalgamated Association had many points of advantage; but the strike was a defeat, and a serious one at that. It did not have the hearty indorsement of a large number of workmen. It was not a movement to redress any grievance. It was fought for a principle, but the movers did not consider the power against which they were obliged to contend.

The Amalgamated does not to-day have the power in the steel trade that it had at the beginning of the contest. Instead of having all the mills organized that it then had, it has lost nine union works. But the association will profit by its experience now, as it did by its experience in 1892. It reckoned also in 1901 on the hope that a general strike might be declared on the part of other labor organizations, and especially by the American Federation of Labor, with which it is affiliated. These hopes were not realized, and hence it felt compelled to make the settlement agreed upon September 13. The result has led to some bitterness as between individuals, but this has no relation to the history of the affair.

It will take many years to recover the strength that has been lost. It is claimed by officers of the association that, as some of the mills which were non-union prior to the strike have retained their charters, the result is a



greater number of lodges and increased membership in the association. There certainly had been a steady gain in the number of lodges and members for a few years prior to the convention of May, 1901. In all probability, therefore, the association will recover, so far as membership is concerned, its position at the beginning of this year. Whether or not its influence will be regained depends upon the wisdom of its administration.

The United States Steel Corporation, being desirous of minimizing the recurrence of strikes, has requested a three years' scale; but this matter will have to be decided at the next convention, the proceedings of which will be watched with great interest, for undoubtedly the delegates will take up matters of vital importance to the association.

The cost of the strike of 1901 cannot be accurately gauged at the present time, but it is estimated by officers of the association that the number of men out of employment during the strike averaged 30,000. There were at times very many more than this out of work. It is also estimated that the wages of the 30,000 men on strike would average \$3 per day. These estimates seem to be fairly conservative. Taking them for a basis, there must have been a loss of more than \$4,000,000 through the duration of the strike. The officers of the steel company have claimed in the public press that they experienced no great loss as the result of the strike.

The Amalgamated Association finds itself facing new conditions, and it must adapt itself to their influences. All the facts relating to the strike indicate the necessity of organization, but the results growing out of the experience of the past summer cannot now be foretold. The philosophy of events will be watched with great interest by all students of economics.

CARROLL D. WRIGHT.